

# VIRTUES OF TILAAWAH

(Chapter From Faaizaan e Sunnat)

Ameer e Daawat e Islaami  
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## The Virtues of Recitation

### ***The Greatest Worshipper***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said  
‘The greatest worshipper is the one who recites the (Quran)  
most.’ (Kanz ul Ammaal)

### ***Recitation cures the heart’s decay***

The Madani Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* stated  
‘Verily hearts become rusty just as metal turns rusty when  
touched by water’. He was asked how hearts were cleansed to  
which he replied ‘Through plentiful remembrance of death and  
the recitation of the Quran.’ (Mishkaat)

### ***Ten deeds for one letter***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* proclaimed  
‘Whoever recites one letter of the Quran receives one deed in  
return and that deed is worth ten. I do not claim that  
AlifLaamMeem is one letter but rather Alif is one letter, Laam is  
one letter and Meem is one letter.’ (Mishkaat)

### ***The Knowledge of the Quran is the Best***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said  
‘Verily the best of you is the one who studies the knowledge of  
the Quran or teaches it to others’ (Bukhaari)

### ***The knowledge of the Quran is better than the best wealth***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* once asked  
‘Who of you wishes to go in the morning to either Bathaan or  
Aqeeq<sup>1</sup> and, without doing wrong or upsetting anyone, return in  
the evening with two large humped she-camels?’ The people  
replied ‘Yaa Rasoolallah, we would all want that’. The Prophet  
*sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* then explained ‘Then why doesn’t

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<sup>1</sup> Name of two places

any one of you go to the Mosque and teach or learn the knowledge of just two verses of the Quran. These two verses will be better for you than the two large humped she-camels. Three verses will be better than three she-camels and four verses will be better than four she-camels. The number of verses taught or learned will be better than an equivalent number of she-camels.’ (At Targeeb wa Tarheeb)

### ***Double reward for the one with a stutter***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘The one proficient in reciting the Quran is with the Kiraaman Kaatibeen (the angels who record actions). The one who stutters whilst reading the Quran and for whom reciting is difficult has two rewards.’ (Bukhaari & Muslim)

### ***The deserted heart***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘That middle (heart) which has no part of the Quran (in it) is like a deserted (empty) house.’ (Tirmidhi)

***Had we not forgotten the teachings of the Quran  
Time would not have shown us this time!***

### ***Those busy in recitation are given without asking***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Allah states that whoever was prevented from My Dhikr and from asking Me by the (recitation of the) Quran will be given more than I give to those who ask. And the Word of Allah (Quran) is better than the other books in the same way that Allah is better than His creation’ (Tirmidhi)

### ***Recitation even in the grave***

Isa bin Muhammad states ‘After his death I saw Abu Bakr bin Mujahid in a dream reciting the Quran. I asked him ‘How can you still recite the Quran after having passed away?’ He

explained ‘At the end of each prayer and every time I finished reciting the Quran I would pray to Allah to allow me to recite the Quran in the grave. That is how I am able to read it.’ (Shara us Sudoor)

### ***Intercession for ten relatives***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Whoever recited the Quran, memorised it, recognised it’s halaal as halaal and it’s haraam as haraam<sup>2</sup>, Allah will accept his intercession for ten relatives upon whom Hell had become compulsory.’ (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

### ***Allah remains pleased with the one who recites Surah Faatiha***

Below His Arsh Allah has created an Angel whose head is like that of a human and who has 70,000 arms. Upon each arm is a batallion of angels. Scribed on his right cheek is Surah Ikhlās and *Ashaadu anlaa ilaaha illallah* on his left cheek. Surah Fatiha is written on his forehead.

In front of it are 70,000 rows of angels constantly reciting Surah Faatiha and each time they reach ‘*Iyyaaka Na’budu wa Iyyaaka Nasta’een*’ they all fall into Sajdah (prostration) Allah says to them ‘Oh Angels, Raise your heads, I am pleased with you all’. On hearing this the angels plead ‘Oh Lord, Be pleased also with everyone of the Ummah of Muhammad who recites Surah Fatiha.’ Allah answers ‘Oh Angels, Be Witness, I am pleased with them too.’ (Nuzhat ul Majaalis)

### ***Reward of 10 Qurans in just a few minutes***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Everything has a heart and the Quran’s heart is Surah YaaSeen. Allah will reward

<sup>2</sup> Recognised the matters that the Quran declared permissible as permissible and the matter recognise and treat impermissible the matters that it deemed impermissible.

the recitor of Surah YaaSeen with the reward of reciting 10 complete Qurans.’ (Tirmidhi)

### ***Forgiveness of past sins***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Whoever recites Surah YaaSeen for the pleasure of Allah will have all his previous sins forgiven. So read it near your deceased.’ (Daarimi)

### ***Frightening black dog***

Hadhrat Allaama Yaafiee states ‘I have heard from some of the Saaliheen (pious) of Yemen that after having buried a body an enormous explosion was heard from the grave and a black dog was seen escaping from the grave. One of the pious men asked the dog ‘May you be destroyed, what and who are you?’ The dog replied ‘I am the bad deeds of the deceased’ The pious man then asked ‘That explosion, did it hit you or the deceased?’ The dog replied ‘It hit me. What happened was that Surah YaaSeen and all the other verses the deceased used to recite came into the grave and did not let me near him and forced me to flee!’ (Roadh ur Riyaahen)

### ***The insightful thief***

Hadhrat Abu Hurayra narrates ‘The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* ordered me to guard the Sadaqah of Fitr. (One night) a man came and began helping himself to the grain. I grabbed him and told him that I would take him to the Prophet but he began pleading that he was very needy with a family to feed. So I let him go. The next morning the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Oh Abu Hurayra, where is your prisoner from last night?’ I explained ‘Yaa Rasoolallah, he explained his great need and family. I felt sorry for him and let him go’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘He lied to you and will surely return.’ I was sure that he would return because the Prophet had said so and I was waiting for him and he came back and began filling up with grain. I grabbed him and told him that I was going

to take him to the Prophet. He again pleaded ‘Let me go! I am very needy and dependant, I won’t come again.’ I again felt pity on him and let him go. In the morning the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Oh Abu Hurayra, where is your prisoner?’ I explained ‘He expressed his great need and desperation and I again felt pity and let him go’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘He lied to you and will return’. I again waited for him and he came and again began to fill up with grain. I caught him and told him that I would surely take him to the Prophet for this was the third time and each time he had said he wouldn’t come back but still came back. He said ‘Let me go, I will teach you some words by which Allah will give you benefit; when you go to bed read Ayat ul Kursi in full and Allah will appoint over you a guardian until dawn and the devil will not come near you’, I thus let him go. In the morning the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Where is your prisoner?’ I explained ‘he offered to teach me some words through which Allah will benefit me’ The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘What he taught was the truth but he is a great liar, do you know who you have been talking to for the last three nights ? I replied ‘no’ The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* revealed ‘He was the Shaitaan (devil)’ (Sahih Bukhaari)

### ***The Interceding Surah***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘In the Quran there is a Surah of 30 verses which will intercede for the human in a way that he will be forgiven. (And) that (Surah) is Al Mulk’. (Tirmidhi)

### ***Safe from the Azaab ul Qabr***

Hadhrat Ibn Masood narrates ‘Allah will protect from the punishment of the grave the one who recites Surah Tabaarak each night. During the time of the Prophet we used to know this surah as Maani’a.’ (Shar us Sudoor)

The definition of night: the time from sunset up to the break of dawn.

### ***Reward of 1,000 verses***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Do you not have the ability to recite a thousand verses each day?’ The people replied ‘Who could have such an ability?’ The Prophet replied ‘Not even the ability to recite Al Haku Mutakaathur?’ (*Bayhaquee*)

(In other words reciting Surah Takaathur has the reward of 1,000 verses)

### ***Reward of one-third of the Quran***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* once asked ‘Are you unable to read one third of the Quran each night?’ The People replied ‘How could anyone read a third of the Quran in one night.’ The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* explained ‘Surah Ikhlāas is equivalent to a third of the Quran.’ (*Bukhaari & Muslim*)

### ***Reward of half the Quran***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Surah Zalzala is equivalent to half the Quran, Surah Ikhlāas is equivalent to a third of the Quran and Surah Kaafirun is equivalent to a quarter of the Quran.’ (*Tirmidhi*).

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* was at the door of Masjid ul Nabawi when a funeral arrived. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Does he (the deceased) have any debts?’ The People replied ‘Upon him is a debt of 4 Dhirham’ The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* ordered ‘You people pray his funeral, I will not read the funeral of a man who had a debt of 4 Dhirhams and died before paying it’. At that moment Jibrail descended and pleaded ‘Yaa Rasoolallah, Allah sends His salutations upon you and states ‘I send Jibrail in the form of a

man who will pay the man’s debt so you should read the funeral prayer for he is Maghfoor (forgiven).’ Allah further states ‘Allah will also forgive whoever participates in his funeral’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* asked ‘Oh Jibrail, how has this person earned such rank and honour?’ Jibrail replied ‘He used to recite Surah Ikhlāas, which contains the attributes of Allah and His Praise and glory, a hundred times each day. So whoever recites this Surah with sincerity even once in his lifetime will not leave this life without having seen his house in Paradise. In particular whoever recites this Surah repeatedly in the five daily prayers will have this Surah intercede on the day of Qiyaamah for him and all his relatives upon whom Hell was compulsory.’ (*Moizza tul Hasana*)

### ***A strange tale of the reward of Surah Ikhlāas***

Qaadhi Abu Bakar bin Abd ul Baaqi Ansaari narrates from Salama bin Ubaid that Hammad Makki related that one night he entered a graveyard in Makkah. He fell asleep next to a grave and witnessed all the deceased standing in circles. He asked them if Qiyaamah had arrived. They replied ‘No, rather one of our brothers has recited Surah Ikhlāas for us and for a whole year we have been distributing it’s reward!’ (*Shara us Sudoor*)

### ***50 years of Sins forgiven***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Whoever recites Surah Ikhlāas 200 times in a single day will have 50 years of sins forgiven, except for debts. (*Tirmidhi*)

(Outstanding Debts will not be forgiven. Obviously if the lender forgives the debt then that is a different matter)

### ***Paradise is compulsory for the recitor of Surah Ikhlāas***

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* heard a man reciting Surah Ikhlāas and proclaimed ‘Jannah is compulsory (for him)’ (*Tirmidhi*)

**A store of Divine Mercy**

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* was asked ‘Which is the biggest Surah?’ He answered ‘Surah Ikhlāas’. He was then asked ‘Which is the biggest verse’ he replied ‘Ayat ul Kursi’. He was then asked ‘Which verse is most beloved to you and your Ummah’ he replied ‘The final verse of Surah Baqarah for it is a treasure chest below Allah’s Arsh containing His mercy. Allah has bestowed this verse to this Ummah. There is no goodness of this or the next world which is not contained in that verse’.

(Dhaarmi)

**An act which protects from the Devil**

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Sins will not come near the person who recites Surah Ikhlāas ten times after the Fajar Prayer, no matter how much the devil tries!’ (Ibn Asaakir)

**Reward of 100 Martyrs**

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘The one who recites Surah Ikhlāas once will receive the reward of 100 martyrs’

(Moidha tu’l Hasana)

**A Third of the Quran**

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Whoever recites Surah Ikhlāas once it is as if he has recited a third of the Quran and whoever recites Surah Ikhlāas twice it will be as if he had recited two thirds of the Quran, and whoever recites Surah Ikhlāas thrice it is as if he had recited the whole of the Quran. And Allah will build a house in Paradise for the one who recites Surah Ikhlāas 11 times’. (Kanz ul A’maal, Moiza tul Hasana)

**70,000 Angels seek forgiveness for him**

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said ‘Whoever recites **A’oozu billaahi Assamee’ ulaleem min asShaytaan nir a jeem** three times in the morning followed by the last three verses of Surah Hashar, Allah will appoint 70,000 angels to continuously

perform Istigfaar<sup>3</sup> for him until the evening. If that person was to die that day he would die as a Martyr. The same would apply if he recited similarly in the evening. (Tirmidhi)

That is 70,000 angels would perform istigfaar until the morning and if he died during that night he would be a martyr.

**Sunnahs and Etiquettes of Recitation**

- It is obligatory upon every Muslim to memorise one verse of the Quran. However it is Fard Kifaiya<sup>4</sup> to memorise the whole of the Quran. The memorisation of Surah Faatiha and another small Surah or its equivalent, e.g. three short verses or a long verse, is compulsory upon every Muslim.<sup>5</sup>
- It is better to recite the Quran from the Mushaf (written version of the Quran) than reading from memory. This is because the former necessitates reading, looking and touching of the Quran, all of which are forms of Ibaadah.
- It is good practice (mustahab) to recite the Quran with wudhu whilst facing the Qibla and wearing good clothes. It is Sunnah to begin with **Aaoozu billah** and if the recitation starts from the beginning of a Surah then reciting **Bismillah** is also Sunnah, otherwise it (**Bismillah**) is Mustahab. If the first verse of recitation begins with a pronoun referring to Allah Ta’aala then it is strongly recommended to begin the recitation with both **Aooza billah** and **Bismillah**.

<sup>3</sup> A Dua seeking forgiveness from Allah

<sup>4</sup> A collective obligation. If one person in the society undertakes it the compulsion is relieved from every one. But if no one fulfills it then every one in the society is liable (and sinful)

<sup>5</sup> So that the Salah (prayer) can be performed with the compulsory quantity of recitation, e.g. the Fard Salah requires recitation of Surah Fatiha and 3 other verses in 2 rakahs whilst the same is required in each rakah of Sunnah salah.

- If any worldly talk takes place between the recitation one should repeat both **Aooza billah** and **Bismillah**. However, if the talking was of a religious nature, for example the returning of Salaam or Adhaan, or utterance of **SubhaanAllah** or Kalima Tayyiba etc then repeating **Aoozu billah** is not necessary.
- There is no harm in reciting the Quran lying down as long as the feet are contracted (drawn together) and the mouth is open. In addition, recitation is permissible whilst walking or working as long as the heart does not deviate, in which case recitation is Makruh.
- It is not permissible to recite the Quran in the bathroom or other impure places (e.g. toilets).
- When the Quran is being recited aloud it is obligatory for all present to listen if the gathering has been instituted for the purpose of listening to the Quran. Otherwise the listening of one person is sufficient, even if the others are busy in work. (Guniya; Fataawa Ridhviya)
- It is haraam (forbidden) for all people in a gathering to recite the Quran aloud. Often all the people in the gathering of the Third<sup>6</sup> recite the Quran aloud and this is haraam. When a number of people are reciting the Quran at the same time the ruling is that all should recite quietly. (Bahaar e Shariah from Durr e Mukhtaar etc). However each individual should recite in a manner that, as long as each is of sound hearing, each can hear his own recitation.

<sup>6</sup> The gathering of Eesaal usSawaab (involving recitation and durood) held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after death when the period of mourning ends.

- It is not permissible to recite the Quran aloud in a marketplace or any other place where people are busy in their work. If in such a case no one listens the recitor will be sinful.
- If the recitor had begun his recitation before the people had begun their activities and the place is not one where work normally takes place then the people will be sinful if they do not listen. However, if the recitation began after the people had begun their activities then the recitor will be sinful. (Guniya)
- In order to memorise it is permissible for several students to recite the Quran aloud at the same time in a school.
- A recitor may during his recitation stand for the arrival of a respected religious person, Islamic ruler, Scholar, teacher or father. (Guniya)
- It is better to recite the Quran aloud when it will not disturb anyone praying, sick or asleep. (Guniya)
- If a person is reciting incorrectly it is compulsory upon the listener to correct him, as long as it will not lead to resentment or envy (Guniya). Similarly if one borrows the Mus'haf (copy of the Quran) and discovers a typographical error it is compulsory to inform the owner. (Bahaar e Shariah)
- It is a sin to forget the Quran after memorising it. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam* said 'All the good deeds of my Ummah were presented to me, even the person removing a piece of straw from the mosque! All the sins of my Ummah were presented to me and there was no greater sin than the one who was given a Surah or verse and forgot it'. This hadith has been narrated by both Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi and it is mentioned in a second narration that whoever forgets the

Quran after reading it will be raised as a leper on the day of Qiyaamah. (*Abu Dawud, Daarimi, Nisai*)

It is also stated in the Quran that such a person will be raised blind.

- A man may approach his wife in a house where a Quran is kept as long as the Quran is covered. (*Bahaar e Shariah*)
- It is the practice of Muslims that if they get up to go somewhere whilst reading the Quran they do so after closing the Quran. They do not leave the Quran open. This is out of respect. However, the tale that one should not leave it open to prevent the devil reading it is baseless. (*Bahaar e Shariah*)
- The respect of the Quran also entails that one does not turn one's back to it; nor stretch the feet towards it; nor raise the feet above it and nor sit on a place higher than it. (*Bahaar e Shariah*)
- It is respectful to keep the Quran in a cloth cover or case. This has been a practice of the Muslims since the time of the Sahaaba and Taabi'een. (*Bahaar e Shariah*)
- If a copy of the Quran becomes old and decayed such that it can no longer be read and there is danger it's pages will become scattered and lost then it should be wrapped in a clean cloth and carefully buried in the ground. A grave should be created so that soil does not fall upon the buried Quran. An old and decayed Mushaf should not be burnt. (*Aalamgeeri*)
- No other book or other thing should ever be placed upon the Quran. Even more, no cloth should be placed upon the box which contains the Quran. (*Bahaar e Shariah*)

- If, Allah forbidding, the Quran was to fall from someone's hand, there would be no penalty.
- If, Allah forbidding, somebody disrespected the Quran or placed his foot upon it to show his disrespect he would become an apostate (Kaafir).
- The Quran should be recited with enthusiasm and attentiveness.
- The Quran should be recited with presence of heart. Boredom should never be displayed during recitation.
- Before commencing the recitation ensure complete purity and cleanliness.
- Alongside physical purity and cleanliness during recitation one must also ensure the heart is pure of evil thoughts and emotions and impure intentions.
- Always sit in a clean and pure place for the recitation of the Pure Scripture (Quran).
- Ensure that during recitation you firmly acknowledge the greatness of Allah in your heart, alongwith the greatness of the Quran, and also be convinced that what you are reciting is not the word of any man.
- If it would not harm anyone recite the Quran aloud.
- Refrain from reciting the Quran to impress or attract others or to show your piety or to display your good voice.
- Endeavour and make special arrangements to recite the Quran at Suhoor and Tahajjud prayer.

- Alongwith the recitation also read the translation and tafseer (explanation).
- Recite the Quran with the commitment to live your life in line with it's commandments and to correct your life in light of it's guidance.
- Recognise that the recitation of the Quran is a means to gain closeness to Allah. Believe that an inclination towards the Quran is in fact an inclination towards Allah.
- Observe the rights of the verse and perform Sajdah after the Verses of Sajdah.

**The way to perform the Sajdah of Tilaawah:** After reciting or hearing the verse of Sajdah stand and with the intention of performing the Sajdah of Tilaawah proclaim '**Allah u Akbar**'. After this go straight into Sajdah and recite '**Subhaan a rabbi yal Aalah**' at least thrice<sup>7</sup>. Rise from the Sajdah whilst proclaiming '**Allah u Akbar**'.

Proclaiming '**Allah u Akbar**' at the beginning and end of the Sajdah is Sunnah. Standing before and after the Sajdah is Mustahab. (Durre Mukhtaar).










There is no need to raise the hands (in Takbeer) or read Tashahud or perform Salaam. (*Bahaar e Shariat*).

- Do not treat the stories of the past nations and Prophets mentioned in the Quran as mere stories but seek lessons and morals from them.







<sup>7</sup> Thrice: Three times

- During recitation pronounce the letters correctly and ensure that you maintain a distinction between similar sounding letters such as Alif, Ain, Seen, Saad etc.

**Try and take the effect of each verse you recite**, for example;

-  Be joyful with happiness when the eternal blessings of mercy, forgiveness and paradise are mentioned.
-  When the frightening Fury and Wrath of Allah and Hell are mentioned the body should tremble. Tears should flow from the eyes and the heart should repent and feel remorse and one should seek Allah's shelter.
-  The face should light up in happiness in reading the success of the pious.
-  The reader's face should be stunned in sorrow after reading the destruction of previous nations.
-  The body should tremble with the recitation of a verse of Warning and Fear
-  The soul should overflow with emotions of gratitude after reciting a verse of glad tidings.
-  Perform Tasbeeh and Takbeer after reciting a verse of Tasbeeh.
-  Seek forgiveness (Istigfaar) when reading a verse of Istigfaar.
-  When you come to a verse of hope and reliance raise the hands in dua to Allah.



-  Instead of relying upon your own comprehension and thoughts to undersand the Quran rely upon the ability and support of Allah and continuously plead for His Guidance and Help.
-  Along with recitation study and master the Sciences of the Quran and encourage others to do the same.
-  Do not entertain any notion of giving or receiving a fee for reciting the Quran.
-  Recite the Quran in subsections split in accordance with the number of days in which you aim to complete it's recitation.
-  After reciting the Quran be plentiful in Istigfaar for your shortcomings, mistakes and negligence.
-  Make a special Dua (supplication) after the recitation of the Quran.

**'O Our Allah, bestow us the ability to recite the  
Magnificent Quran and to act upon it,**

**Aamen bijaa' inNabiyyil Aameen'**